

REMARKS

Claims 9-22 and 24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 9 and 24 are amended. Support for the amendments to claims 9 and 24 can be found in the specification, for example, at Figure 3. No new matter is added. Claim 23 is canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. Reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

I. Personal Interview

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiners Han and Yuan during the personal interview held May 12, 2010, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicant's separate record of the substance of the interview.

II. The Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 9, 10, 12-15, 17-20 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Iio et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,663,990, hereinafter "Iio"); and rejects claims 11, 16, 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Iio in view of Driggers (U.S. Patent No. 4,186,707). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed during the personal interview, Iio fails to teach "the pressure regulating means being disposed outside of the circulation route," as recited in independent claim 9, and as similarly recited in independent claim 24, as amended. As discussed during the personal interview, Iio instead discloses a control valve 11 and a hydrogen draw pump 12 being connected in series, and the control valve 11 being disposed inside the circulation route. *See* Iio, Fig. 9. Further, Driggers does not remedy the above-described deficiency in the application of Iio to the subject matter of independent claims 9 and 24.

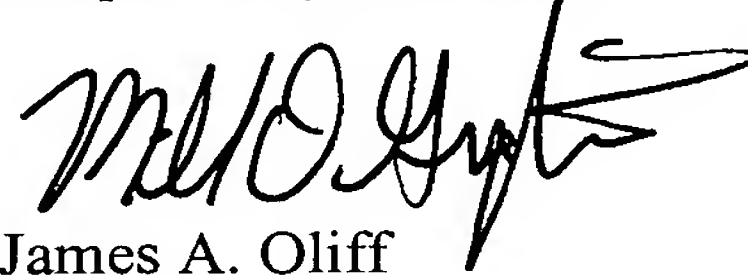
For at least this reason, independent claims 9 and 24 are patentable over the applied references. Claims 10-22 are also patentable over the applied references for at least their dependence on independent claim 9, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 9-22 and 24 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Request for Continued Examination

Date: May 26, 2010

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